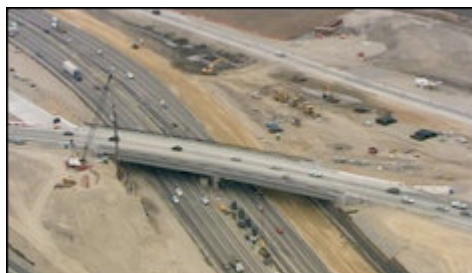


UDOT eliminating HOV lane in I-15 Core project construction zone

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UTAH COUNTY -- Drivers in Utah County can see construction work move into full swing on the [I-15 Core project](#).

It involves a complete rebuild of the freeway between Lehi and Spanish Fork, and the work already may be confusing for drivers.

Work crews are in a transitional period, getting the existing freeway ready for the actual construction. The most noticeable change is the disappearance of the high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane.

To accommodate the construction, the Utah Department of Transportation says it has to temporarily eliminate the HOV lane because of lane closures for the work.

For the past few days, crews have worked in the middle of the night to blast one of the double white lines to create a general travel lane. The diamond symbol is also gone.

But that has left many drivers wondering if the HOV lane is still for carpool or express users or if it is open to anyone.

We asked UDOT for an answer and found the lane is still for carpools, at least until the signs are taken down.

"What we are doing right now is restriping those lanes, and that work is happening overnight," said I-15 Core spokeswoman Heather Barnum. "You will see those signs removed, which designates Express Lanes in the next few days. So once those signs come down, they will be open as a general travel lane."

If it looks like construction is already underway, it is actually crews doing a lot of survey work along the I-15 corridor. They are also installing new utility infrastructure and bringing in cement barriers for the work.

The entire stretch of freeway will turn into a construction zone with a lower speed limit. UDOT estimates the actual rebuilding will begin in the next 10 to 14 days, so it is close to happening.

UDOT is encouraging drivers to start altering their travel habits now so the construction doesn't come as such a jolt.

"Whether it is working out a telecommuting program with your company or an alternate work schedule or even just deciding not to travel during peak hours, to get use to that right now, those are the kind of things that are going to help with congestion and significant delays that are coming from the construction," Barnum said.

When the project is finished in December of 2012, the HOV lane will be back and will continue south all the way to Spanish Fork.

Story compiled with contributions from [Sam Penrod](#) and [Marc Giauque](#).

Radio: <http://real.ksl.com/video/slc/3/318/31804.mp3>

Video: <http://www.ksl.com/index.php?nid=148&sid=10449440>

